



PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

US-395 REALIGNMENT RIGHT OF WAY PRESERVATION

SAN BERNARDINO ASSOCIATED GOVERNMENTS (SANBAG)

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WHAT IS THE US-395 REALIGNMENT PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT?

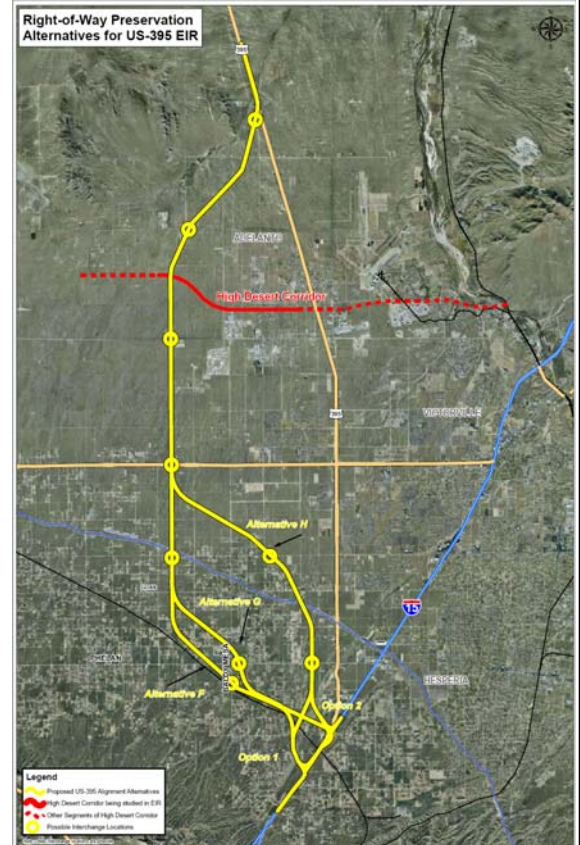
San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG) has begun preparing a Program Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to preserve right-of-way for the future realignment of US-395 through the Victor Valley.

Affected communities include Adelanto, Apple Valley, Hesperia, Oak Hills, Phelan, Piñon Hills and Victorville.

The Program EIR will identify and evaluate three alternative alignments using technical studies and input from the public and local jurisdictions. The SANBAG Mountain-Desert Policy Committee, comprised of area elected

officials, will serve as the steering committee throughout the Program EIR and will make a final recommendation on the locally preferred alignment to the full SANBAG Board. The Program EIR and the locally preferred alignment will be submitted to the SANBAG Board of Directors for approval after each of the three alternatives have been studied and public comments have been received.

The Final Program EIR is intended to be used by local jurisdictions to amend their general plans to preserve the right-of-way for the realignment of US-395.



HOW IS THE SANBAG EIR RELATED TO OTHER CALTRANS EFFORTS FOR US-395?

Caltrans District 8 completed a Project Study Report/Project Development Support in 2001 that identified five alternative alignments to US-395. However, subsequent development in the western Victor Valley, including portions of all five of the previously identified alternative alignments, has rendered the proposed routes problematic.

In response to this situation, SANBAG, in cooperation with

partner agencies, has identified three additional alternative alignments that are the subject of this EIR. This Program EIR has the specific objective of developing consensus on an alignment that can be preserved by local jurisdictions. It is being coordinated with a larger Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) that Caltrans has initiated for the full US-395 corridor, which extends north of State Route

58 to Farmington Road.

This larger Caltrans effort will produce the documents and approvals needed to build a realigned US-395 as a limited access freeway/expressway. The Caltrans EIR/EIS will involve additional alternatives and more detailed engineering and environmental work than the SANBAG EIR. The Caltrans effort also will take an additional 3-4 years to complete.



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PAGE 2



WHY IS THIS PROJECT NEEDED?

The realignment of US-395 is needed to meet existing and future traffic demands, separate long-distance through traffic from local traffic and increase the efficiency of freight movement through the region.

The combined population of Adelanto, Apple Valley, Hesperia and Victorville has grown by 70,000 residents in just the last five years. At current growth rates, the population of the Victor Valley could approach one million within the next several decades. A vibrant, growing

area like the Victor Valley needs a transportation system to meet the needs of its residents.

The new alignment also will provide an improved route for cargo-carrying trucks traveling to and from Nevada and other western states to Southern California.

WHY IS THIS PROJECT BEING UNDERTAKEN NOW?

It is critical to preserve a new alignment for US-395 as soon as possible. Alignment studies have been conducted in the past, but growth in the Victor Valley has been so rapid that the previously identi-

fied alternatives are now outdated. The goal of this project is to provide local jurisdictions with a legal mechanism for preserving a corridor for the realigned US-395 by 2008 so that residents and business operators

can know where the future highway will be located and plan around it. If plans are delayed, finding a new alignment will become even more difficult, due to higher costs and increased impacts to communities.

WHEN WOULD A NEW US-395 BE BUILT?

The first step in the construction of a new highway is to identify the location of the alignment. The Program EIR will provide local governments, businesses and the public with the location of the realigned US-395.

However, Caltrans, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration, will need to conduct detailed engineering and environmental studies before receiving project level approval. Federal project approval for the realignment of

US-395 is not anticipated until late 2011. Right-of-way acquisition and design could take another three to five years following federal approvals. Depending upon the availability of funds, construction could start between 2015 and 2020.

HOW CAN THE COMMUNITY PROVIDE INPUT AND STAY INFORMED?

SANBAG will provide a fully open process of information-sharing and input, so that decisions are made in the best overall interest of those who live and work in the Victor Valley. The Program EIR process allows for completely transparent decision-making and many opportunities for public comment. Please participate in the process by:

- Attending Open Houses or other public meetings;
- Visiting the SANBAG website at www.sanbag.ca.gov (click on Active Projects on the home page);
- Adding your name to SANBAG's mailing list through the website or at a community meeting;
- Completing and submitting a public comment form available at

community meetings and through the SANBAG website; and

- Calling the toll-free project helpline at 1-877-HWY-395R

Meeting announcements will be posted on the SANBAG website and promoted locally. We welcome your involvement!